

ARIZONA HISTORICAL ADVISORY COMMISSION

Application for Arizona Centennial 2012 Legacy Project Designation

AHAC Mission: Develop, encourage and coordinate a statewide plan for Arizona's centennial in 2012 including advising the legislature and state agencies on centennial history and heritage, arts and culture, assisting the governor's countdown to the centennial to support school children learning about Arizona's history and recommending activities and projects that will ensure lasting accomplishments to commemorate the centennial.

Vision for Centennial Projects: Commemorations that encourage all Arizonans to reflect on our unique and authentic history, to experience the rich and diverse tapestry of our heritage, and to explore our promising futures, thus ensuring a lasting legacy.

Legacy Project Criteria: This is a request for official designation as an Arizona Centennial Legacy Project. To be considered, the project must 1) accurately portray a significant aspect of Arizona history; 2) be accessible to large number of visitors/users; 3) demonstrate collaboration in the planning; 4) produce an enduring product that will live on after 2012; 5) include an educational component; 6) include a plan for implementation.

Attach a maximum of three pages that address the following areas, in the order listed:

1. General description of the project.
 2. Describe how this project meets the Legacy Project criteria.
 3. Project timeline. Give details regarding planning and implementation.
 4. Describe the project location.
 5. List project partners, if applicable.
 6. Attach a proposed budget, showing total project cost and funding sources.
 7. Please also provide letters of support from project partners and sponsors.
- These are in addition to the three-page maximum.

Name of project: Mesa Grande

Applicant: Arizona Museum of Natural History


Contact person: Thomas H. Wilson

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Signature (authorizing official)


Date

The Arizona Historical Advisory Commission will review the Committee's recommendations and make final decisions regarding Legacy Project designations. Submit application to:

Arizona Historical Advisory Committee
1700 W Washington, Suite 200
Phoenix, AZ 85007

General Description of the Project: Mesa Grande

Mesa Grande is a prehistoric Hohokam platform mound owned and preserved by the City of Mesa through the Arizona Museum of Natural History (AzMNH). The Hohokam were the Native Americans who developed the great agricultural civilization of the Salt and Gila River Valleys from almost 2000 years ago to A.D. 1450. The Hohokam built the most significant irrigation system in the prehistoric New World and they are known for the architectural and cultural richness of their sites. Mesa Grande, which flourished from about A.D. 1100-1450, was a political and religious powerhouse that most likely controlled major portions of the irrigation system on the south side of the Salt River. The descendants of the Hohokam are the Akimel and Tohono O'odham, who still live in the area today.

Mesa Grande is one of the few remaining major Hohokam sites that can be opened to the public. Two that have been interpreted are Pueblo Grande Museum and Archaeological Park in Phoenix and Casa Grande Ruins National Monument in Coolidge. In 1927 the citizens of Mesa first called for preservation of Mesa Grande, and this dream came to fruition when the city obtained the ruins in 1988. In 1991, a Heritage Fund grant allowed the museum to develop major preservation and interpretive plans for Mesa Grande, *A Master Development Plan for the Proposed Mesa Grande Archaeological Park* (70 pp plus appendices, 1994) and *Preserving Temples of Clay: A Stabilization Plan for the Mesa Grande* (165 pp, 1995). Since the city acquired the mound, the museum and its archaeological auxiliary, the Southwest Archaeology Team (SWAT), have implemented the stabilization and preservation plan. The centennial legacy project will begin interpretation of the mound for the general public.

Ultimately, we envision a full visitor's center at Mesa Grande. The centennial legacy project will be phase one of the ultimate dream, and will include trails, interpretive modules and kiosks with shelters, all associated infrastructure such as power, electronic communication and fiber optic lines, erosion control elements, and amenities for public use such as water and restrooms. The phase one centennial legacy project will allow us to open Mesa Grande to the general public and lay the groundwork for the full visitor's center, which we anticipate will be a fully "Green" building of Gold or Platinum LEED status, commensurate with the ambience of the site. Mesa Grande is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

How the Project Meets the Legacy Project Criteria

The Hohokam are one of the great civilizations of the prehistoric Southwest, and Mesa Grande is one of the preeminent sites of that era. Interpreting Mesa Grande to the general public accordingly addresses a significant aspect of Arizona history. Themes the interpretation will address include, but are not limited to: the Hohokam in the Southwest; the significance of Mesa Grande in Hohokam culture; the Hohokam as a unique society of irrigation agriculturalists in North America; Hohokam irrigation in the context of historic water use issues in the Southwest; and systems of knowledge: archaeology and indigenous traditions. In these ways, we will not only focus upon the past, but also on what the past can teach us about critical current issues, such as water usage in the Southwest.

When the full visitor's center is implemented at Mesa Grande, we anticipate 30,000-40,000 annual visitors at Mesa Grande, a great proportion of which will be school visits. At the completion of the phase one centennial legacy project, Mesa Grande will be open to the public on weekends and on other days of the week either regularly or specially scheduled. Our annual open house this year drew 500 visitors, so we know there is considerable public interest in Mesa Grande.

AzMNH is committed to collaboration in developing Mesa Grande. The project has significance for Arizona's Native American communities, and our planning partners include members of the cultural resources department of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community and the cultural resources

management program of the Gila River Indian Community. The director of Pueblo Grande Museum is on our team, as are Hohokam archaeologists from Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, and the Center for Desert Archaeology. We have a team member from the University of Advancing Technology in Tempe to assist with use of new technologies in interpretation. Our architectural firm is WHPacific, which is 100% Native American owned.

The whole point of our project is to create a product that will live on after 2012. After abandonment, Mesa Grande has endured for over five centuries, and the city of Mesa and AzMNH are committed to caring for it in perpetuity. Although Mesa Grande has been open to the public on special occasions, the centennial legacy interpretive project gives us the opportunity to systematically open the site to the public. The project will definitely have an enduring legacy.

Educating the general public about the site, the Hohokam, Native Americans in the Southwest, water use and the other themes mentioned above is the purpose of the project. Formats include the interpretive trail system, signage, printed materials, website, and ultimately the visitor's center. We wish to examine methods of on-site electronic communication that go beyond the tried and true trail-and-sign format. The outside venue will offer challenges to this approach, but we believe new technologies will allow us to succeed. In addition, a website, either completely dedicated to Mesa Grande or part of the museum website (www.azmnh.org), will offer opportunities to learn about Mesa Grande to persons around the world. The Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community will plan, as part of the collaboration process, visits for school children from the community.

The implementation plan involves three groups of participants. One group is the external partners listed above from Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Gila River Indian Community, ASU, University of Arizona, Center for Desert Archaeology, Pueblo Grande Museum, University of Advancing Technology, and WHPacific. The second group is the staff of the Arizona Museum of Natural History, including Thomas H. Wilson, director; Jerry Howard, curator of anthropology; Kathy Eastman, curator of education; Tim Walters, exhibitions coordinator; Michael Ramos, graphic designer; and Margaret Barton, collections specialist. The third group is from the departments of the city of mesa, such as engineering, environment, building safety and traffic.

We have already applied new three-dimensional laser-scanning technology to map Mesa Grande many times more accurately than was previously possible. Using this map, and based upon years of guiding tours through the site, we have drafted a trail and interpretive kiosk system that is ADA compliant. We have assembled our planning team and sought funding for the planning process. Planning for the interpretive themes and formats will be completed by late summer 2009. Construction of the erosion control features and the trail system will be completed by the end of 2009. The final interpretive formats will be installed by the first half of 2010.

Project Timeline

The project timeline is similar to the plan for implementation just discussed. This planning will proceed on two major tracks: the interpretive messages based on the proposed themes that we wish to share with visitors and the public, including the formats of the presentations (signs, interactives, website, electronic media), and the preservation and construction infrastructure necessary to implement the interpretive design (trails, kiosks, power, electronic and fiber optic lines). The architectural firm is already selected and the appropriate departments of the city of Mesa are engaged, such as engineering. Thematic planning and interpretive formats will be completed by late summer 2009. Trails and related features will be installed by the end of 2009, and the interpretive formats by the first half of 2010. Even with unexpected delays, the centennial legacy project will be implemented, tested and open to the public by 2012.

Project Location

The project location is Mesa Grande, which is just west of the intersection of Brown and Country Club Roads in Mesa. The site is six acres, and the mound itself is about the size of a football field and approximately 30 feet high. In addition to the trail system, there is room for on-site parking and the visitor's center. To see two aerial views of Mesa Grande and the draft trail plan, go to the museum website (www.azmnh.org), click archaeology on the left menu, and select Mesa Grande.

Project Partners

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community:	Kelly Washington, Shane Anton, Angela Garcia-Lewis, Thomas Wright
Gila River Indian Community:	Barnaby Lewis
Arizona State University:	David Abbott, Ph.D.
University of Arizona:	Suzanne Fish, Ph.D.
Center for Desert Archaeology:	William Doelle, Ph.D.
University of Advancing Technology:	Professor Michael Erwin
Pueblo Grande Museum:	Roger Lidman
WHPacific:	Mary Ann Modzelewski, Cheryl Marks
Arizona Museum of Natural History:	Thomas H. Wilson, Ph.D., Jerry Howard, Ph.D., Kathy Eastman, Tim Walters, Michael Ramos, Margaret Barton
City of Mesa	Various departments

Through the years and currently, the museum has worked with the residents of west Mesa in planning the future of Mesa Grande. Particularly, the Mesa Grande Neighborhood Alliance has designated Mesa Grande its number one priority for local economic development and a "point of pride" for the neighborhood.

Proposed Budget, Total Project Costs, and Funding Sources

Trails	\$ 30,000
Erosion Control Canopies	\$ 87,750
Shade Canopies	\$ 42,000
Signage	\$ 25,000
Conduit	\$ 42,600
Utility Extensions	\$ 40,000
Architects & Engineering	\$ 27,000
Planning	\$ 40,000
Phase one centennial planning	\$334,350
Available dedicated funds	\$350,000

The Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community has funded the project with a \$150,000 grant. AzMNH has applied for a Heritage Fund grant of \$100,000, and the museum has received preliminary notification of intent to fund. Next fiscal year, the city of Mesa may apply at least \$100,000 from cultural impact fees towards the project, and we have applied to NEH for just under \$40,000 for project planning.

Letters of Support

Because we have just collected letters of support from our collaborators in support of our applications to the state Heritage Fund and for the NEH planning grant, we are submitting copies of these letters to support designation as a centennial legacy project. They all address the phase one interpretation at Mesa Grande, which is the centennial legacy project.